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Bangkok student center witnesses through Christmas exhibitions

By Maxine Stewart

The Baptist Student Center in Bangkok, Thailand, held its fifth Christmas Exhibition this past Christmas to acquaint Thai students, as well as others, with the true meaning of Christmas in order to reach them for Christ.

"Believing that the Christmas season is an excellent time for witnessing," says director of English teaching at BSC, Darline (Mrs. Jerry) Hobbs, "the purpose of this exhibit was four-fold:

1. To help interested students who attended the exhibition know the beliefs, meaning, and true spirit of the Christmas season.

2. To bring people together to remember Christ's birth and his life, death and resurrection which brought life and resurrection to mankind.

3. To correct the false image which surrounds Christmas in the minds of most Thai people outside the Christian circles.

4. To give different Christian groups in Thailand an opportunity to work together in a major effort such as the Baptist Student Center Christmas exhibition.

Many churches and organizations have visited the Christmas exhibitions in years past. Some expressed an interest in helping to put this one together. These exhibitions involve a tremendous amount of work, so the additional help was welcome.

Nine churches and organizations participated. Various groups or churches decorated the rooms on different Christmas themes and the tents with Christian and secular Christmas history, including customs of different countries. Different groups had charge of one or more of the eight formal programs held daily in the large auditorium of BSC, for four days. Thus, in 32 programs Christ was preached and Christmas defined.

Six seminaries and churches provided guides (trained in advance) who escorted students to the rooms



Journeyman Lisia Pegues and her friend Khun Lek stand by styrofoam "snowman" in the yard at the Baptist Student Center during Christmas Exhibition. Only Thai people who have gone abroad have ever seen snow. This "Frosty, the Snowman" got plenty of attention during the exhibition. (Photo by Maxine Stewart)

and tents where assigned people explained pictures and displays.

Letters were sent to Thai schools, inviting them to bring students to the exhibition; 27 schools were invited, with a known total of 4,601 students attending. (Some schools who had received invitations did not respond, but attended anyway, making it difficult to know exactly how many students attended.)

Tracts and books were given to all who attended. Gifts were given to those who could answer questions correctly during the formal program, based on what they had seen and heard during the tour of the exhibition. Companies and individuals contributed small gifts to be used in this manner.

Artists were employed to paint

several life-sized Bible pictures which were placed at strategic places throughout the four-story building. The workmanship was outstanding and the pictures will remain a permanent fixture in the BSC.

At each of the formal meetings, questionnaires were distributed to the students in an effort to determine the effects of the exhibition on their minds and feelings. This information was later turned over to missionary Tim Owens to use in the follow-up of interested students.

Those involved in the Christmas exhibition say they feel that the purpose of it was accomplished. They know that they may never see the results of their many months of labor in souls won to Christ. "If some misunderstandings concerning Christmas and Christ can be corrected," Hobbs points out, "these students may be instrumental in helping to dispel the myths and half-truths concerning Christmas for future Thai generations. It will take many more exhibitions and much more teaching in order to help the Thai people know what Christmas and Christianity is really all about. One good result is the public relations built between the BSC as Christ's representative and the schools invited."

The minister of religion was present to open the exhibition on Dec. 19 at 8 a.m. The ceremony was well attended by various Christian groups and proved to be an enjoyable and relationship-building experience for all who were present.

"The results, I believe," declares Hobbs, "will appear in future Christmas seasons. When these students and teachers hear something false about Christmas many of them will say, 'That's not right. We learned the true meaning of Christmas at the Baptist Student Center in December.'"

Stewart is missionary press representative, Thailand.



A hand painted cloth poster of Jesus inviting all Thai people to "Come Unto Me" hangs on the end of the Baptist Student Center during Christmas Exhibition in Bangkok, Thailand. The center is located at a busy intersection where thousands of people can see the painting daily during Christmas. (Photo by Maxine Stewart)

Crooked elevator shafts rebuilt

NASHVILLE (BP) — Portions of two elevator shafts recently built for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's new nine-story office/conference tower are being torn down and rebuilt to correct alignment problems.

A series of laser tests was conducted on the shafts in early October after visual inspection indicated the shafts might be several inches out of true vertical position. Results showed the upper portions of both shafts are out of plumb. The exact cause of the construction problem has not been determined.

The number of levels to be removed and rebuilt on each shaft will be decided in consultation with personnel from Otis Elevator Co. and representatives of other affected subcontractors. Cost of demolition and rebuilding will be borne by Patten Construction Co., builders of the \$15.5 million project.

Correction of the problem should take about two months, said John Doherty, facilities planner/designer for the board.

Meanwhile, construction of the tower atop the board's Operations Building is continuing, with completion scheduled for late 1990.

Telephone ministry offers encouragement in Colombia

By Art Toalston

CALI, Colombia (BP) — In two of Colombia's most troubled cities, Cali and Medellin, "a voice of encouragement" named teleamigo is being called upon 2 million times a year.

The telephone ministry, sponsored by Cali-based Baptist Communications, offers 60-second taped inspirational messages as well as personal counseling.

It receives up to 80,000 calls a month in Cali and up to 100,000 a month in Medellin, reported John Magyar, the Southern Baptist missionary from St. Louis, Mo., who directs Baptist Communications.

Two full-time counselors in Cali and one in Medellin handle more than 10,000 calls a year, Magyar added. In Cali a team of 20 Baptist volunteers also has been assembled and trained for contacting callers open to personal visits, and the same is planned in Medellin.

Teleamigo — a name fusing the Spanish words for "telephone" and "friend" — was started in Cali in 1978 and in Medellin in 1986 and is planned for Bogota and Barranquilla "when we have the funds to do it," Magyar said. Once teleamigo is in place in all four cities, the ministry expects to handle some 5 million calls a year.

Citizens in the four cities, who account for nearly half of Colombia's 32 million people, have felt under siege since August, when the government began its crackdown on the nation's drug lords. Some 200 retaliatory bombings have been perpetrated by drug gangs, killing dozens of bystanders.

In the past five years, drug-related violence has claimed the lives of more than 1,500 Colombian policemen, judges and journalists.

Baptists also plan to launch teleamigo operations in Caracas, Venezuela; Santiago, Chile; and Santa Cruz, Bolivia, Magyar noted.

The 24-hour-a-day, year-round

telephone ministry has come to be known by the slogan "a voice of encouragement." It seeks to provide "an uplifting, inspirational or human-interest message to all callers," said Magyar.

At the end of the taped message, another number is mentioned if callers want personal counseling. Workers staff the counseling lines from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. each weekday except holidays.

Teleamigo messages aim at reaching people at all levels of society, Magyar explained. "We seek to touch people at the point of their felt need."

The counselors have dealt with an array of problems, such as family strife, alcohol abuse, abortion and suicide. "When the telephones ring," Magyar said, "the counselors never know quite what to expect."

Teleamigo has played a part in the baptisms of hundreds of people in Baptist or other evangelical churches in Cali and Medellin, Magyar said. Many more have visited Baptist churches or home Bible study groups. One convert, Luis Alberto Ramos, now is co-pastor of a Baptist church in Cali, while several others have risen to leadership positions in their congregations.

Toalston writes for FMB.

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

If Christmas, then Christian

Christmas is approaching, and decorations are up in grand array. That means that the annual dispute over what can be displayed is under way.

What is happening is discouraging on one hand but to be applauded on the other. Many public buildings are not displaying any decorations at all this year because Christian symbols have been ruled out in public places in many instances. The absence of decorations is to be applauded. If the Christian symbols cannot be used, then there should be none.

The discouraging factor is that if we give up on displaying Christian symbols, we will have abdicated our Christian holiday and turned it over to the secular world.

What needs to be remembered, but what seems to have been forgotten, is that Christmas is a Christian holiday. If it is to be observed at all, there is no reason that Christian symbols should not be used. There is no doubt but that displaying Christian symbols such as a cross or a nativity scene would have the effect of promoting Christianity, which perhaps could be construed as being contrary to the First Amendment to the Constitution. The amendment stipulates that "Congress shall make no law regarding the establishment of a religion . . ."

On the other hand, to prevent the use of Christian displays at Christmas also could be construed as being contrary to the First Amendment. It continues by saying, ". . . or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Since Christmas is a Christian holiday, to prevent the use of Christian displays certainly would seem to be prohibiting the free exercise of religion.

The problem is that we Christians have allowed the secular world to take our holiday away from us. There are school districts now that don't refer to Christmas holidays. They are called the "Winter Season."

In a way, that's good. If there are to be no Christmas displays allowed, the holidays should be called something else. It would be interesting to know how the merchandising community would respond to dropping "Christmas" from the holidays. For one person to ask another what he wants for the winter season doesn't seem to have much ring to it.

The City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County in Pennsylvania are to be commended. Allegheny County was told that it could display a manger scene if it surrounded the manger scene with displays of Santa Claus and other secular decorations. The county declined to put up any displays at all.

The City of Pittsburgh traditionally had been displaying a menorah, a Jewish symbol, with its Christian decorations until it was made aware that the county had given up all displays. Thereupon the city did also.

The cross is already lit on the Capital Towers Building in Jackson, a private building. It will not shine from the Sillers Building, which is a state-owned building.

So far there is no display at all on the Sillers Building. It should stay that way.

Christmas, as the very name implies, is a Christian observance.

It would seem that if there is to be no Christian concept in the observance, then the idea of a holiday should be dropped altogether.

It is guaranteed that the merchants would howl about that. A great deal of their annual business is done at Christmas.

The best solution seems to be to go back to the traditional way of making the season an unabashed Christian observance with as many Christian symbols and displays as might be desired.

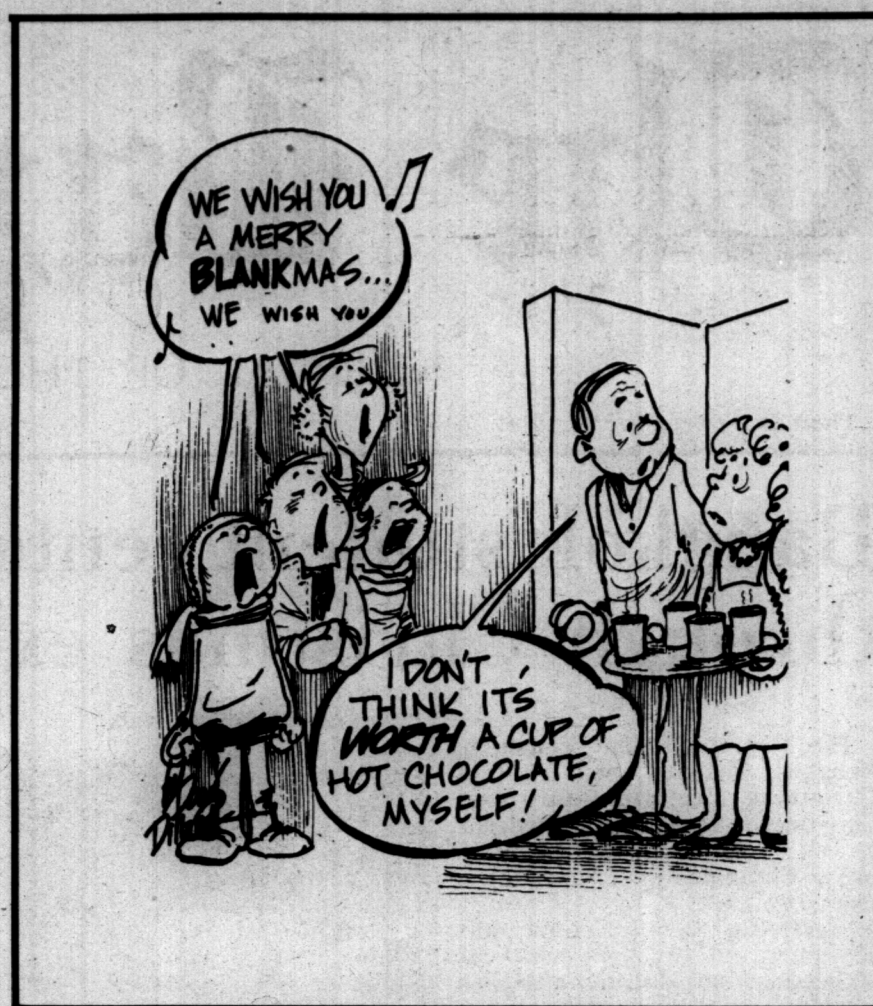
The American Civil Liberties Union would not like that, but just about everyone else would.

Since that is not likely, and it is likely that Christian symbols are going to become more and more rare at Christmastime, perhaps it would be well for Christians to do away with the idea of a big nonreligious blowout at that time of the year. That would give the Christian community an opportunity to "put Christ back in Christmas" as we have been saying we have wanted to do for years.

Would we really do that?

Not likely. We have become too much a part of the massive shopping spree.

But crosses and nativity scenes should not be outlawed.



Lottie Moon . . . Hospital, classrooms, home

By John Tarpley

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering through the years has made possible the following for our work in Ogbomoso:

At the hospital —
the operating room I worked in
the chapel where we hold outpatient worship services daily
the clinic buildings and the wards
At the seminary where Margaret works —
the four story library building with the school chapel
the classroom and administration

buildings
the Nigerian Baptist Convention Media Building
the newly constructed married students dormitory
For the missionaries —
the house we live in as well as other missionary housing
the missionary kid school buildings where we hold the home study course.

John Tarpley is a physician working at the Baptist Medical Centre in Ogbomoso, Nigeria.

Baptist beliefs . . . Twofold nature of the gospel

By Herschel H. Hobbs

"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed . . . For the wrath of God is revealed." — Romans 1:17-18

The gospel reveals both God's righteousness and wrath. In Romans "righteousness" denotes not God's attribute but his activity whereby he declares us to be righteous. The Greek *dikaosune* belongs to a family of nouns ending in *eta* (long "e"). It expresses something that is not necessarily true but which one chooses to regard as true. We are not righteous within ourselves, but those who believe in Christ are regarded as righteous. It is God's righteousness in

Christ (Rom. 10:3-4) which is put down to our account. And it is a matter of faith from beginning to end.

The Greek has two words for wrath. *Thumos* was used of the rapid burning of dry grass which is of short duration. It is used of a localized wrath of God which soon subsides. This is the wrath which destroyed Sodom. A few miles away Lot and his daughters were safe.

The other word is *orge*. It denotes God's abiding, universal opposition to evil. It was used by John the Baptist in Matthew 3:7. The picture is that of

(Continued on page 4)

Guest opinion . . . Our finest hour

By Lewis Myers

Toni and I recently stood in Pingdu, China, where Lottie Moon had worked. We walked through what had been a Baptist compound of residences, school, bookstore, church, and hospital.

We moved on the next day to Penglai (formerly Tenchow), where the "Little Crossroads" residence she occupied still stands. Faithful Christians still meet in the recently restored church building where a monument to her stands in the courtyard — a tribute from the Christians with whom she worked.

We both felt such intense emotion at both places and pondered why that was so. "Miss Moon" was an unusually effective missionary, but we had known dozens who had distinguished themselves through the years.

As we reflected, it occurred to us that Lottie Moon was the most visible and enduring symbol of a love affair Southern Baptists have had with missions from our beginning. Her memory has become the most visible and enduring linkage between the needs of the fields of the world and the missionaries who serve there on the one hand and those of us who love the people of the world and enthusiastically embrace and support

the cause of missions on the other. She symbolizes the meshing of two great spheres — the needs of our world and the resources of our people.

The annual Lottie Moon emphasis in our churches at its best should launch two great movements each year which create tidal waves lasting all year. The prayer focus, by far the most important emphasis, impacts not only the current needs but it impels us to regular, consistent concerted support all year long. Likewise the offering not only meets immediate critical needs, but it also inspires us to be consistently faithful in gifts through the Cooperative Program all year long.

When our oldest was in school at Mississippi College and we were still serving in Vietnam, he got several opportunities to speak in churches during the Lottie Moon season. He wrote us an urgent letter asking, "What did the Lottie Moon offering provide for our work?"

My answer was that it helped provide the house we lived in, the car we drove, the Bibles we used, the tracts we distributed, the school books and materials they used in their home study program, medical insurance that paid for her broken arm, air

passage for him to come back to the states for college and some scholarship assistance — all we need for our family and our work.

The 1990 budget of the Foreign Mission Board looks toward the 1989 Lottie Moon Offering for 46.31 percent of its annual operating budget or \$74,960,000 plus \$6,040,000 for capital needs. As I glance through the budget I note missionary family needs; evangelism programs; leadership development; and media, health care, and human needs ministries to name a few.

As I ponder these needs similar to the way I answered Michael's question, I keep wondering what will go unmet if we don't reach the \$81 million. A radio broadcast to an unreached people in a restricted country? New Bible printings? Opening work in a new country or area? Surely not the appointment of new missionaries!

Mississippi Baptists have always distinguished themselves in their love for missionaries and their support of missions. May this be our finest year!

Lewis Myers of Skene, Miss., is a vice-president of the Foreign Mission Board with Cooperative Services International.

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"Cinderella Chocs" win national championship

By Norman Gough

The Cinderella Chocs of Mississippi College are the national champions of Division II football after blanking previously undefeated Jacksonville State 3-0 in the championship game played in Florence, Ala., this past Saturday.

The amazing Chocs, entering the national playoffs four weeks ago with the worst record of the 16 teams invited, shocked No. 1 ranked Texas A & I University 34-19 in the opening round and there was no stopping after that. They manhandled St. Cloud State University of Pennsylvania 26-14, then shut out Jacksonville 3-0 for

the national title. The Choctaws four playoff opponents had a combined record of 45-2 and were ranked No. 1, 2, 5 and 9 in the final poll of the season. The Chocs were 12th.

Ironically, it was Shane Stewart, son of Rev. and Mrs. Herbert Stewart of Forest, who kicked the field goal to bring the national championship to Clinton. Stewart is pastor of the Magnolia Heights Baptist Church in Forest and was present in Florence, Ala., for his son's three-pointer. The field goal split the uprights from 19 yards out with 6:13 left in the third quarter and came at the end of a 49

yard, 10 play drive.

Quarterback Wally Henry of Pontotoc spoke for all players when he said post-game, "God was good to us. He gave us a second chance after we lost our season final to Delta State." In fact, the team adopted as its playoff slogan "11 plus One" which Henry explained was the team plus God. Most of the players wore T-shirts under their jerseys during the game carrying that slogan.

Immediately after receiving the championship trophy from NCAA officials on the field, the players, coaches, managers, trainers and

school officials returned immediately to the dressing room, went to their knees and were led in prayer by Lewis Nobles, president of the college.

The national championship is the first for any football team in Mississippi won on the playing field. The Chocs finished the 1989 season with a 11-3 record, the most wins ever recorded by a Mississippi College team and the most wins ever by a Mississippi team.

"It's amazing how that 11 plus One theme seemed to turn things around for us," said Head Coach John

Williams. He explained that in a pre-game devotional given by former Choc receiver Ron Frank prior to the Texas A & I game, Frank told the squad that A & I was probably the best team ever in Division II and that there was no way the Chocs could beat them 11 to 11. He said they could win with 11 plus One.

The Chocs did win — they won it all! Quite an accomplishment for a small Mississippi Baptist college with an "11 plus One" motto.

Norman Gough is public relations director at MC.



Baptists visit North Korea

NEW CHURCH BUILDING — This building of the Bongsu Christian congregation is the only Protestant church structure in all of North Korea. Ko Gi Jun (center right) told Lewis Myers (Mississippian) (facing, left), director of Cooperative Services International, a Southern Baptist aid organization. Ko is secretary of the government's Korea Christian Federation. Sam James (right) is a Southern Baptist official. Li Young Nam (left) was the interpreter-guide for the visiting Southern Baptist delegation. (BP) PHOTO By Warren Johnson

WMU Festival of Light contrasts two Christmases

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE (BP) — Santa Claus was waving to small children at one end of the mall. And waving at the other end were more than 100 flags representing nations where Southern Baptists perform mission work.

The contrast of Christian and secular Christmas was evident Saturday, Dec. 2, when the Nashville Baptist Association Woman's Missionary Union brought 37 countries to one of the city's oldest malls.

"We want the general public to be aware of what Southern Baptists are doing around the world and where they are doing it," said Diane Stewart, Nashville Baptist Association WMU director in charge of the missions fair at 100 Oaks Mall.

Stewart said she and eight others on the associational WMU council began in June planning for their first Festival of Light missions fair.

"Traditionally, during the Christ-

mas season we hold a Baptist Woman's Day of Prayer, where we pray for foreign missionaries and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for (foreign) missions," Stewart said.

This year, the WMU wanted to do more to heighten missions awareness — not only among the unchurched public, but among Southern Baptists as well, Stewart said. "Really, our purpose for a missions fair was twofold. We are educating our own people about the countries Southern Baptists serve, and we are sharing Jesus Christ with those who just come to browse our mission booths."

About 40 of the 141 churches and missions in Nashville Association participated in the missions fair, dressing in their assigned country's traditional garb, and serving indigenous foods. Several churches participated by providing choral and instrumental music.

Mississippi, Texas will try it

Baylor prof pilots plan to boost Cooperative Program

By Ken Camp

DALLAS (BP) — Positive action, not further analytical study, is the answer to the downward trend in Cooperative Program percentage giving, according to Charles S. Madden of Baylor University.

Madden, marketing professor and associate dean of graduate programs at Baylor's Hankamer School of Business, and his graduate students have conducted research to discover reasons for the downward trend in the percentage of churches' undesignated receipts given to the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptist unified budget plan for missions support.

The "positive action" Madden would like to see is implementation of an educational and promotional plan — soon to be piloted by two state Baptist conventions — that is designed to reverse the decline in percentage Cooperative Program giving at the level of the local church.

"Trends in Cooperative Program giving have been studied to death in Southern Baptist life with consistent, redundant results," Madden said. "The bottom line is that we've been promoting individual giving, not impacting the corporate budget-making process in our churches."

Developing new strategies for "impacting" the budget-making process, "telling the Cooperative Program story" and reversing the downward trend in percentage giving were among the challenges given to a task force created by the Baptist General Convention of Texas executive board at its Dec. 5 meeting in Dallas.

Responding to the findings of Madden's research, the board approved a recommendation from the BGCT administrative committee that the 15-member task force be created to develop new approaches to Cooperative Program promotion and education.

The task force, to be appointed by the BGCT president and the chairman of the executive board, will include pastors, laypeople, directors of missions and BGCT-related employees. Madden will be consultant.

Creation of the task force is in keeping with the objectives and goals of "Mission Texas: Reach, Grow, Serve," the long-range convention plan for 1990-95. The plan identifies Cooperative Program education and promotion as a special emphasis during the first half of the coming decade.

Mississippi Baptists agreed earlier to launch a Cooperative Program promotional campaign based on Madden's findings. Two hundred of the 2,000 Southern Baptist churches in Mississippi are being targeted during the first year of the five-year pilot program, with the eventual goal of all

churches being contacted.

Unless the current decline in Cooperative Program percentage giving is reversed through promotion and education, Madden said, missions, education and evangelistic endeavors across the Southern Baptist Convention could be jeopardized.

Most churches "feel good" about the Cooperative Program, Madden noted. However, the Cooperative Program finds itself competing with many other worthwhile budget items in Southern Baptist.

"Every study reveals that Southern Baptists have a positive attitude about the Cooperative Program. Most active Baptists still associate the Cooperative Program with obedience and missions support," Madden said.

"However, while church giving has

(Continued on page 4)

Judd Allen to retire

Judd R. Allen of the Mississippi Baptist Sunday School Department will retire effective Dec. 31. He came



Allen

to the department on June 1, 1965, serving there 24 1/2 years. He has served as adult consultant and most recently as consultant for general administration and associational Sunday School work.

Allen has been active in developing the work of the ASSISTeam in Mississippi, which is an acronym for Associational Sunday School Improvement Support Team. Last year, Mississippi associations

reached 82 percent of full strength in providing such teams to support Sunday School work.

Allen is a native of Mobile. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and Southwestern Seminary. He was Mississippi alumnus of the year for 1989-90 at Southwestern. He has been pastor of churches in Philadelphia, Jackson, Meridian, and Canton. On retirement, he will continue to be pastor of Ogden Church in Yazoo County.

Allen and his wife, Ruth, have three children: Mrs. Beverly Livingston of Huntsville; David, a dentist in Jackson; and Charles, who is an Allstate insurance manager in Little Rock. The Allens have eight grandchildren.



Pictured are award winners from the associational awards banquet. Winners listed are directors of missions unless otherwise noted, with name of association, and award. Front row, from left, are Kermit Sharp, Neshoba, Cooperative Missions; J. Paul Jones, Mississippi, Category III; J. C. Mitchell, Oktibbeha, Brotherhood; Emmett Wade, Northwest, Sunday School; Ervin Brown, Northwest, Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries; second row: Jerald Welch, Humphreys, Category I; Holmes Carlisle, Scott, Category IV; Mary Stringer, associational WMU director, Jeff Davis, WMU; Ken Stringer, Jeff Davis, WMU; Nat Mayhall, Alcorn, Evangelism; top row: Charles Nikolic, associate, Hinds-Madison, Category VII; Lynn Mackey, Wayne, Study Course; James Webster, associate, Hinds-Madison, Stewardship; Rick Spencer, Monroe, Music; and Bill McCreary, Tippah, Discipleship Training. Not pictured are Guy Hughes, Yalobusha, Category II; and George Lee, Marion, Category V.

Awards banquet recognizes associational ministries

Southern Baptist Churches cooperate together through their local association. Distinguished awards recognize these ministries. The Program Director hosts an Associational Awards Banquet to encourage Directors of Missions. The banquet is held each year during the Mississippi Baptist Convention. This year the banquet was Nov. 14 at Calvary Church, Jackson.

Distinguished awards go to the association which excels in each program area. Church ministries of that association determine the strength of the association. Church residential membership ranks associations according to size. The category plaques go to the association with the healthiest church ministries.

The Distinguished Sunday School Award went to Northwest Association, Ervin Brown, director of missions. Emmett Wade is religious education director. Northwest also received the Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries Award. Discipleship Training presented its award to Tippah Association, Bill McCreary, director of missions. The Distinguished Award for Church Music was presented to Monroe Association, Rick Spencer, director of missions. Monroe was recognized for its planning, support, and participation in music ministry.

The association with the largest number of churches with organized Missions Development Programs receives the Distinguished Cooperative Missions Award. Neshoba Baptist association with 26 churches with church missions development programs was presented this award. Kermit Sharp is director of missions and Mrs. Eleanor Burt is associational missions development director.

Alcorn Baptist Association, Nat Mayhall, director of missions, received the Evangelism Award based on ratio of baptisms to resident church membership. The churches in Alcorn Association had a ratio of 1 baptism for every 19 resident members. The overall state ratio is about 1 to 40. The Brotherhood Award was presented to Oktibbeha Association, J. C. Mitchell,

director of missions, in recognition of its outstanding work in this area. Hinds-Madison, J. W. Brister, director of missions, received the Stewardship Award.

A Distinguished Study Course Award is presented each year to the association having the most churches with the largest number of members earning study course credit. The award for 1988-89 went to Wayne Baptist Association, Lynn Mackey, director of missions. The outstanding WMU Associational Award went to Jeff Davis Association, Kenneth Stringer, director of missions. Mrs. Mary Stringer is associational WMU director.

Awards of Excellence are presented in seven categories each year. An association is placed in a category according to resident church membership. The Awards of Excellence were presented to:

- Category I — Humphreys Baptist Association (1 to 2000);
 - Category II — Yalobusha Baptist Association (2001 to 3000);
 - Category III — Mississippi Baptist Association (3001 to 4000);
 - Category IV — Scott Baptist Association (4001 to 5000);
 - Category V — Marion Baptist Association (5001 to 7000);
 - Category VI — Lowndes Baptist Association (7001 to 10,500);
 - Category VII — Hinds-Madison Baptist Association (10,501 to 50,000).
- The awards of Excellence are based on the Strong Church Index.

Goodrum plans living tree

Goodrum Church, Vicksburg, will sing from its Living Christmas Tree on two occasions. Both times the choir will be singing the musical "Everlasting Light." The two performances will be Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary; and Dec. 18 at 7 p.m. at Pemberton Square Mall in Vicksburg.

Baylor prof pilots plan to boost unified giving

(Continued from page 3)
increased over the past several decades, the percentage of undesignated receipts given through the Cooperative Program has declined.

"Very few churches make deliberate choices against the Cooperative Program. Decreases are usually a by-product of other decisions."

According to Madden, the keys to reversing the downward trend in percentage Cooperative Program giving are improving knowledge; increasing commitment; influencing individual choice; influencing the philosophy of pastors and church leaders; and making the Cooperative Program an active competitor for

funds in the budget-making process.

Establishing a network of Cooperative Program "advocates" in local churches — people who understand the unified budget plan and are willing to "speak out" for it when church budgets are being adopted — is essential, Madden said.

He warned against the problems caused by designated giving as opposed to giving through the unified budget of the local church, state convention or Southern Baptist Convention.

Baptist beliefs

(Continued from page 2)

a desert fire from which snakes and other desert creatures sought to escape. Since the fire or wrath is everywhere, where will they flee for safety? Only to where the fire has already burned.

The only safe place from God's orge is at Calvary, where it has already been poured out upon Jesus.

If you would declare the whole gospel, you must include God's wrath (orge) as well as his righteousness by grace through faith in his Son.

Herschel Hobbs is pastor emeritus of First Church, Oklahoma City.

Hillcrest music

The sanctuary choir of Hillcrest Church, Jackson, will present Christmas music '89, at 10:45 a.m., Dec. 17. Tom Larrimore is director.

What is a people (ethno-linguistic) group? It is a people tied together by name, language, race, heritage, culture and sometimes geography, though many groups extend across national boundaries. "They know each other," says FMB research director Clark Scanlon. "They have what sociologists call a web of relationships or networks, and the gospel can travel along those networks just as surely as missionaries take the message along roadways."

Carey board names chairman

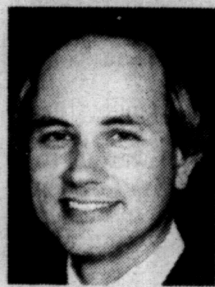
At a special meeting of the William Carey College Board of Trustees, Andy Carpenter of Biloxi was unanimously named chairman. Robert Self, pastor of First Church, Brookhaven, was named vice-chairman, and David Spencer of Long Beach was named treasurer. Hugh Dickens, vice-president and dean of the Graduate School, was re-elected secretary.

Carpenter is executive vice-president of People's Bank of Biloxi. He has served on the Board of Trustees for three years, serving as chairman of the Finance Committee for the past year.

William C. Browning, Long Beach, was welcomed as a new Board member. He is a graduate of William Carey College and presently serves in a supervisory capacity with Mississippi Power Company. He is a former president of the William Carey College Alumni Association.

In other matters, the Board approved a new tenure policy for faculty members.

Staff changes



Cottingham

Ronnie Cottingham, music evangelist, has accepted the call of Cleary Church of Florence, as staff evangelist. Gene Gillis is pastor.

Splunge Church, Amory, has called James Rutledge as pastor, effective Nov. 12. A native of Pontotoc County, he received his education at Blue Mountain College and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Victory Church, Nettleton.

Mt. Pleasant Church, Bogie Chitto, has called Karen Yarborough as minister of music, effective Nov. 12. A native of Smithdale, she received her education from University of Southern Mississippi. Her previous place of service was First Church, Roswell, New Mexico.

Baptist conventions in countries where Southern Baptists work have more than 2 million members in more than 19,000 churches.

Flora Church, Hinds-Madison

Association, has called Chuck Hampton as pastor, effective Dec. 17. A native of Shannon, he received his education from Blue Mountain College and Southwestern Seminary. His previous place of service was Gaston Church in Booneville.

Gaston Church, Booneville, called

Kenny Griffith of Crowder as minister of music and youth, effective Aug. 20. His previous place of service was Crowder Church. He received his education at Delta State University.

Griffith

Adron Horne has announced his retirement, effective Dec. 31. He has served as pastor at Bissell Church, Tupelo, for nine years. He will be available for supply work.

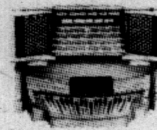
Non-Christians support seminary

HONG KONG — Non-Christian members of a community center sponsored by Hong Kong Baptist Church participated in a recent project to support the Baptist seminary there. Center director Tang Kwok Tai, a part-time seminary student, challenged members at the community center to raise money for the seminary. They responded with \$1,000.

Those unable to give decided to knit and sell woolen scarves. Eight of the 16 members who did so had never held knitting needles before. The effort netted an additional \$2,500. About half of the center's 300 members are Christians. Since the center opened last November, more than 20 people there have accepted Jesus Christ as Savior.

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Mississippian is chaplain of university football team

By Mark Wingfield

PITTSBURGH (BP) — Pastor Dan. Crow has two congregations. One worships in a small building with a bell tower; the other plays in a 56,500-seat stadium.

Crow is pastor of Pittsburgh Baptist Church and chaplain to the University of Pittsburgh football team.

For 13 weeks each fall, Crow spends Friday nights and Saturdays with the Pitt Panthers. He often travels with them to out-of-town games, attempts to talk individually with each player before a game and goes to the hospital with injured players.

He will travel with the team to El Paso, Texas, for the John Hancock Bowl Dec. 30.

Pittsburgh Pastor Danny Crow is a native of Vicksburg, Miss. His mother and father live there and are members of Trinity church. Crow and his wife, Becky, are graduates of Mississippi College.

Before each game, Crow leads a brief session of singing, Scripture reading and prayer. He gives motivational talks based on Scripture and counsels with players facing various problems.

"If we're playing Notre Dame, they pray a lot," he quipped. Crow, who is a member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee immediate past president of the Baptist

Convention of Pennsylvania-South Jersey, does the chaplaincy work as volunteer. He sees it as one of many ministries the church can perform in the community.

"I go in there and I say, 'I just want to be your friend,'" Crow said.

"I rejoice with them and I weep with them. Football players need somebody to love them. They are loved by the masses but not by students, who see them as a privileged class.

"And if you ask a football player how he feels about playing for a university, he'll tell you he feels like a prostitute. If he doesn't produce, he's gone.

"I don't have that pressure on them. If they don't produce, I'm still a friend."

Crow hasn't tried to tackle his Saturday congregation with the gospel. Instead, he has run alongside them for three years, waiting for players to intercept his message when the time is right.

"My goal is not to have them whipped into heaven this week," he said.

"My goal is to share a biblical message with them that will lead to a decision.

"You've got to be willing to invest time without an immediate return." In the third year, that commitment has begun to pay off in tangible ways.

Several players and wives have made professions of faith in Christ, some have joined his church, and his relationships with the players are deeper, Crow said.

This season, one player who previously had been polite but distant was glad to see the chaplain. "He put his arm around me and said, 'Could we sit down and talk,'" Crow recalled.

The player recounted how he had injured his knee the previous season and how his father had died of a heart attack during the summer. He told Crow: "I always heard what you had to say, but never thought it was for me. Now I've realized the things you say are true. I want you to know I've committed my life to Christ."

That player, like 80 percent of the team, is from a Catholic background. In fact, the University of Pittsburgh is considered a Catholic school where evangelicals — and particularly Southern Baptists — are a definite minority.

Crow's surprising opportunity came about because of his love for college students. Pittsburgh Baptist Church is located about three miles from the University of Pittsburgh campus.

On his own, Crow determined to spend time on campus witnessing to students. Through this outreach, he met the Panther quarterback coach, who became a member of his church and later invited Crow to one of the games.

"The chemistry hit," Crow said of his first encounter with the players. "I could relate to the guys."

Because of that, Crow was invited to become the team's permanent chaplain — a role that had always been filled by a Catholic.

"It's not just that I am a Baptist," Crow explained of his ministry opportunity. "It's that I'm in a church that has a presence."

He sees this ministry as an important step in building good relations for Southern Baptists in an area where they are not well known. "It's building a positive image for Southern Baptists and it's building bridges that will last into the future," Crow said.

"We're going to see a lot more evangelism now. But we had to buy the ticket first."

Mark Wingfield writes for the Atlanta BP bureau.

Parkway, Natchez, grows by Outreach Bible Study

By Keith Williams

"The days are gone when people who need the Lord seek out the church; It is our responsibility as the church to seek out those who need the Lord," said Debbie Redfield, co-leader of an Outreach Bible Study group for Parkway Church, Natchez.

She continued, "It was our pastor who first planted that thought in my mind. As a Christian I know that reaching out to a lost world is what the church is all about. To glorify God and spread the good news of Jesus Christ is our purpose. One way that we have accomplished this is by Outreach Bible Study."

The idea of Outreach Bible Study, a short-term evangelistic Bible Study which is held away from the church, was first presented in a planning meeting by the church staff. The leader for the Outreach Bible Study group was Russell Butts, an adult Sunday School teacher. For some time, Russell had been seeking an outreach/teaching opportunity. When the opportunity to begin an Outreach Bible Study group came about, he volunteered to lead this group.

The Outreach Bible Study was conducted in an apartment building recreation room. The apartments, owned by a member of the church, were visited by Butts and Redfield.

They informed the individuals of the time and place of the Bible study. The original expectation was for this to be an adult Outreach Bible Study group. During the first meeting, it was obvious that this would become a youth Outreach Bible Study group. "The excitement of the youth over the simple Bible stories was an enjoyment to each of us. They came as God prepared their hearts," Redfield said.

There have been many results from the Youth Outreach Bible Study group. One of the girls has joined the Sunday School and youth choir. Two brothers who attended have moved to another town but they, along with their single mother, have made professions of faith and are active in their church. "It truly has been a blessing to me to have been such a small part of seeing God's word through the efforts of one Outreach Bible Study," said Debbie.

If a church needs assistance in establishing an adult or youth Outreach Bible Study, contact the Sunday School Department, of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at 968-3800. The Sunday School Department is ready to provide training for leaders and assist in organizing Outreach Bible Study group.

Keith Williams is a consultant in the Sunday School Department.

Ballet Magnificat to perform

Kathy Thibodeaux's Ballet Magnificat will perform a Christmas program, "Thy Kingdom Come," on Dec. 22 at (7 p.m.) and Dec. 23 at (2 p.m.) at the Jackson Municipal Auditorium. This program will feature a ballet with approximately 80 students from Ballet Magnificat's School and Studios, along with other pieces from

the company's repertoire.

Those attending are being asked to bring food items for collection in the lobby to be given to those in need. There will be a suggested donation of \$3.00 at the door for the company and an offering will be taken to benefit the school. For more information, call Ballet Magnificat at 982-1920.

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"Position Opening"

Academic Vice-President, William Carey College

THE COLLEGE: William Carey College is owned by the Mississippi Baptist Convention and is committed to excellence in undergraduate programs in liberal arts and sciences, professional studies, and a limited number of graduate programs. Constituents are served from three campuses in Hattiesburg and Gulfport, Mississippi, and New Orleans, Louisiana, and at various National Guard facilities throughout the state of Mississippi. The college is named for William Carey, the father of modern world missions, and emphasizes programs in Christian service and personal student development. Major academic units include divisions of Allied Sciences, Business, Education and Psychology, Fine Arts, Humanities, Nursing, Evening and Military Programs, Support Services, Honors Programs, and Graduate Studies. The main campus is located in Hattiesburg, a progressive community of 50,000 situated within 1-2 hours' drive of New Orleans, the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and Mobile, Alabama.

THE POSITION: The Academic Vice-President reports directly to the President and is the chief academic officer and Dean of the College. This person has program and budget responsibility for all academic offerings; provides leadership to the faculty

in admissions and scholarship decisions, faculty development, including promotion and tenure; and communication with internal and external constituencies. Salary is competitive and negotiable.

THE QUALIFICATIONS: Qualifications include an earned doctorate, a demonstrated record of high quality performance in teaching and college-level administration, effective communication skills, a maturing Christian faith, an understanding of and ability to work with diverse Baptist constituency groups, and commitment to strengthening the liberal arts base and the integration of faith and learning in the various disciplines and program offerings of the college.

APPLICATIONS OR NOMINATIONS: Letters of application or nomination and a current resume should be sent to:

Academic Vice-President Search Committee
Office of the President
William Carey College
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39401

At least three letters of recommendation should be mailed directly to the committee. Applications/nominations and all support materials should be received no later than January 4, 1990. The anticipated starting date is February, 1990.

Execution faked, missionary hostage thought of scripture

BOGOTA, Colombia (EP) — "You will be executed," Bruce Olson was told after nine months of captivity at the hands of Colombian guerrillas. He had no reason to think they were bluffing. "I had seen six people executed in that nine months. I saw their red blood splatter. Now it was my turn. Fifteen people were involved in my 'execution.' But there were tears in their eyes."

Olson, who had used his captivity to witness to the guerrillas about the gospel of Christ, had seen many of his executors come to faith in Christ. But the guerrillas, most of them between the ages of 15 and 18, are little more than captives themselves, he explained.

As Olson stood before the firing squad, a verse came to his mind: "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing can separate us from the love of God" (Rom. 8:38-39).

"The order was given to fire. I heard clicking sounds," Olson recalls. But the bullets never reached his body. "The guerrillas in amazement opened the chambers and found their leaders had changed their ammunition to blanks. It was a purposeful mock execution."

Olson works with the Motilone Indians, a small, hostile tribe deep in the northeast jungles of Colombia. Some of his missionary work is chronicled in the book, *Bruchko*. He established medical clinics and schools for the tribe, created a written language for them, and has translated 20 books into Motilone, as well as the New Testament.

On Oct. 24, 1988, Olson was captured by hostile guerrillas who hoped to take over the Motilone territory to win their revolution. Friends who Olson had won through his work and his writing were shocked and dismayed. But for nine months, there was little news of his welfare or whereabouts.

"I was captured through a spray of bullets ejected from the machine guns of 40 guerrillas," he recalled. "I was captured and taken to an area adjacent to Motilone territory but in a land occupied by Spanish land settlers. For two-and-a-half months I was tied to a tree in the jungle."

Olson said he didn't blame God for the captivity, but instead asked him how he could serve him each day. In

talking with the guerrillas Olson realized that many of them were illiterate. "So I took a pencil and paper and started teaching them how to write in Spanish." Books were scarce, "so I suggested they bring a New Testament." The leaders agreed, and Olson "opened it to the book of Matthew and began to read: 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.'"

"Jesus Christ articulated in simple understandable words his truths, and the guerrillas responded," he said. "Many of them accepted Jesus Christ. 'We are born of the Spirit of Christ,' they said."

The news of Olson's kidnapping made his work with the Motilones headline news in Colombia and other parts of South America during his captivity.

"Colombia realizes now that something great has changed the destiny of the Motilones and now touched the hard core area of Colombia," Olson said. During Olson's captivity, "the president of Colombia asked of the Motilones, 'What is this that has changed the quality of your people? What has brought you into congruency with the western world and has brought peace with the [hostile Indian tribes]? You are living at peace with the land settlers, and are no longer shooting the oil company employees.'"

"The Motilones explained, 'We walk the trail of life... we walk in the footsteps of a new leader.'"

"So the president thinks this new leader must be that missionary Olson, who was kidnapped," Olson added. "But the Motilones were quick to explain, 'No, he doesn't know what roots are ahead of him on the trail. He doesn't know how to speak our language. We taught him this.'"

"Then what brought change to your people?" the president asked. And the Motilones answered, 'We walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.'"

In the sixth month of captivity, "I was having complications and hemorrhaging," Olson recalls. A makeshift hospital was set up, and many of the guerrillas donated blood for a transfusion. The transfusion probably saved Olson's life, but an allergic reaction caused his body to swell and all his muscles to ache. "I felt low," Olson recalls. But it was a rare moment when "I saw the presence of God in the jungle, surrounding me. When I

am sick and isolated, God realizes I am flesh and blood."

The guerrilla leaders, who had been trying through tortures and threats and persuasion to convince Olson to join their army, told him "Now you have guerrilla blood in your veins, come into the movement." Yet he still refused.

Shortly after, they staged the mock execution in a final effort to persuade him to join the movement. Just three days after that unsuccessful attempt, a guerrilla leader told Olson, "I am giving you your freedom." Many of the guerrillas expressed remorse over having put him through the ordeal, but they said, "If we had not kidnapped you we would never have heard of the compassion of Jesus Christ."

The Colombian papers read "Olson Alive," Olson concluded. "But the victory is that of God."



Smith

By James K. Smith

When we think of a child, especially a baby, we do not think of a creature of power but rather one of weakness. Of all the earth's creatures, the young of man is probably the most vulnerable to his environment and must be cared for diligently over a long period of time. So it was with the baby Jesus who was born of woman, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and cared for in a manger.

The difference between this child and others is in that of promise by the Lord to Mary through the angel Gabriel. Luke records that promise for us and tells us that the child would be great (in rank and dignity); called the Son of Highest (promise of messiahship); be given the throne of David (kingship, authority, and power); his kingdom shall never end, and he shall rule forever (power unlimited, unquestioned, and unparalleled) (Luke 1:32-33).

The 'Son of Man' had the power of the universe at his fingertips. He was all God and all man. He had tremendous power, with possibilities for good or for evil. So it was for the child Jesus as he became a man. But, so it is for all of mankind who become children of God. Because the source of power is not found within us but is derived from God, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit we have at our fingertips power unlimited to use within his will.

Let us thank God for the gift of his Son and through him the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Christian's source of power. Let us use it wisely, within his will and always to his honor and glory.

Smith is pastor, Mt. Gilead, Meridian.

Philippine president honors missionary for farming work

WASHINGTON (BP) — President Corazon Aquino of the Philippines has awarded Southern Baptist missionary Mississippian Harold Watson a special citation for helping develop agriculture in her country.

Aquino presented the award in November to representatives of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board during a Washington luncheon

sponsored by the Philippine American Foundation.

Watson was one of three award recipients at the event, which recognized significant contributions to the Philippines by nongovernmental organizations. The others were the Rockefeller family, which has funded health and agricultural assistance in the Philippines since 1913, and CARE, which

has operated there since 1949.

The citation recognized Watson for establishing the Baptist Rural Life Center, an agricultural training center on the Philippine island of Mindanao.

It noted his leadership in developing Sloping Agricultural Land Technology to help the country's resource-poor farmers, and it cited the support he has received from Southern Baptists in the United States.

"The Rural Life Center provides a working model for alleviation of poverty for the poorest Filipino farm families subsisting on infertile upland soils," the citation said. "The government of the Philippines hereby expresses appreciation to the American members of the Baptist Church who have supported Reverend Watson's work in Mindanao and who have provided support for the establishment of the Rural Life Center."

Watson, an agriculturist from Brooklyn, Miss., moved to the Philippines about 25 years ago. He began battling the climate and a tradition of poor farming techniques in an attempt to turn denuded hillsides into thriving gardens. For years he tried and failed to grow food on a 47-acre demonstration farm in the island nation.

Then he and his Philippine assistants developed Sloping Agricultural Land Technology, a natural terracing plan that has formed the backbone for countless programs integrating farming technology, health, nutrition and faith. Its influence is visible throughout the Philippines and many parts of Asia.

Watson and the center have won numerous awards, including the Ramon Magsaysay Award for international understanding, considered by many people in Asia to be as prestigious as a Nobel Prize.

Guests at the Washington awards luncheon included officers and directors of multinational corporations, ambassadors and U.S. senators and representatives. After presenting the awards, Aquino praised the role U.S. nongovernmental organizations have played in the Philippines.

Letters to the editor

Communication with the FMB

Editor:

I read with keen interest the letter from Lydia Hamby of Pearl which appeared in the November 30, 1989, edition of *The Baptist Record*. Lydia's experience with the FMB mirrors almost exactly my experience of several years ago.

I tried to communicate with the FMB about a volunteer mission project for which I was qualified, for which I wanted the FMB only to let me go under their auspices, and for which the FMB had advertised asking for a volunteer. Somehow communication between the FMB and me got so unbelievably fouled up that my personal circumstances changed before, over a period of months of trying, I could get any sensible dialogue initiated. Finally I gave up.

Maybe, just maybe, God used this to tell me that going to that mission field was not his will for me at that time; or perhaps making application with the FMB is made difficult in order to weed out the not totally committed, although I do not believe that.

What I would say to Lydia is that she and I are not the only ones to have had this kind of frustrating experience with the FMB, and that God can and will use us wherever we are even if we feel that where we are is God's second choice for us. I know that now, seven years after the fact,

I am where God wants me at this time.

My prayer is that Lydia, too, will soon come to know that she is where God wants her, and that the FMB will take an incisive inventory of their personnel procurement procedures and their office personnel, because, it seems to me that any 'weeding out' process will be best accomplished by the Holy Spirit's working in the individual's heart rather than through administrative sluggishness and ineptness.

Yours in His service,
Robert M. Moore, Sr.

Thanks from South Carolina

Editor:

In Annual Session on Oct. 24, the messengers of the Screven Baptist Association in South Carolina expressed their unanimous appreciation for all the assistance the people of your state gave to our area during the aftermath of Hurricane Hugo.

We are grateful for Christian brothers and sisters who gave so willingly of their time, efforts, and other resources and who cooperated so beautifully with others in this time of need.

May God richly bless you for this labor and gift of love.

David P. Brien
Director of Missions



Nunnery appreciation

Ralph Hester, trustee of the Mississippi Baptist Children's Village, presents a plaque of appreciation to Paul Nunnery, retiring executive director of the Village during a session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Nunnery retires at the end of the year after serving as head of the child care agency for 29 years.



Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



Thursday, December 14, 1989

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 7

Riding the rails in Russia

I read a book about a man who took a trip across Siberia on a train which people told him, tongue-in-cheek, was called "Fast Train Russia." Now I understand the name.

On Saturday night, Oct. 14, at 6:30 p.m., I boarded a train at Tbilisi, capital of Georgia, enroute to Sochi, on the Black Sea. The distance looks short on a USSR map, but with 38 stops besides sidetracking eight times, it took 18 hours.

In Car 14, I and my 44 traveling companions were assigned to four-person compartments, each with narrow double-decker beds on either side of a window. Like some folks get the neck of the chicken, I always get the top bunk. While the four of us who would occupy berths 17, 18, 19, and 20 were still stumbling around over the luggage, somebody's suitcase fell off my bed and hit me on the temple. My head was hard enough to withstand the blow, but one earpiece got broken off my glasses. At last I learned what the hump on my nose could be good for — holding my spectacles on.

The big bags were to go under the beds and the little ones in the wall recess over the door. That taken care of, I looked for a ladder to climb to my retreat. "The table under the window is the step," somebody suggested from the corridor. It was a giant step for short legs, but I made it.

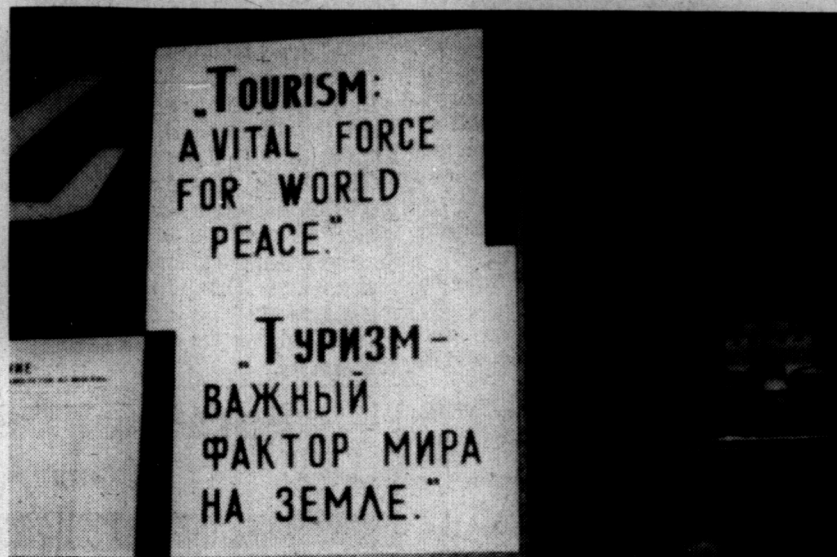
A blanket, sheets, pillow and towels were in a roll at the foot of the bunk. I made up the bed while sitting in the middle of it, a trick I'd learned long ago. But what were the towels for? A glimpse at the repelling restroom had let me know I'd never wash my face in that lavatory, and I surely wasn't going to waste my precious bottle of drinking water on my skin.

On the top bunk opposite, Mary Holliman, Blacksburg, Virginia, publisher, had struggled into her pajamas, and begun reading. I picked up a book, too, but soon I realized I was thirsty. "Watch it! I'm coming down!" I called out to Ouida and Lola below — Ouida Cox, of Little Rock, is editor of Rural Arkansas, and Lola Autry, as you know by now, is a writer and photographer from Hickory Flat. I tip-toed gingerly onto the table, careful not to knock over a water bottle or to step on a peanut butter sandwich.

In the tiny kitchen at the end of the corridor, the porter was making hot tea for anyone. He poured some for me into a glass which he set in an embellished metal holder. This personable man, with brown eyes and reddish brown hair, was kept busy all night serving tea, I think. Everyone kept talking or visiting back and forth for hours.

Since there was no dining car on the train, I ate my snacks from Mississippi — granola bars, vegetable juice, crackers, and vienna sausage — and a pear saved from Tbilisi.

After our lights were out, I could see from my top bunk that we were entering high mountains. Lights flashed past and brakes shushed and squeaked when we stopped in a town. It was peaceful up there, far in the night, to listen to the clickety-click, clickety, clickety, click, click of wheels on rails, and to catch the gleam of moonlight on a river far below. The porter came down the corridor and slammed our sliding door shut. Not until an hour or so later did I discover it was locked from the outside and could not be



This sign extolling the virtues of tourism is posted in the office of Intourist, at Vladimir, Russia.

opened from the inside. In panic, I shook the door and woke up everybody in our compartment. "What if we had an accident?" I asked. "How could anybody get out of here?"

"The porter said to press the buzzer three times and he'd come open it," Lola said. It worked, and he let me out! Oh, joy!

As daylight broke, many were standing in the corridor watching the passing scene. Soon I saw the most beautiful picture I have ever missed taking. In the distance were snow-covered peaks of the Caucasus Mountains, in a purple haze, below a blue sky. This side of them was a forest of trees, mostly October gold. In the foreground was a level meadow dotted with drifts of red sumac and off-white blossoms of Queen Anne's lace. I had read in a guidebook that it was against the law in Russia to take pictures from a train, or to take pictures of planes, ships, or bridges. While I wrestled with my conscience about breaking the law, the train moved on before I won, and I've regretted it ever since.

At one stop, I saw a tiny house beside the track. It had a metal roof and was painted blue and pink. Clothes hung on a line in the yard; a woman in a red dress stood holding the hand of a little girl, while a boy beside them played in a sandbox. Occasionally I saw pigs, and geese. At one place I saw a woman hitting a cow with a stick, to drive it out of her yard. We passed vineyards and a corn field. In some places small two-story white houses were surrounded with a picket fence, and inside that were trees loaded with persimmons, oranges, and apples.

When we reached the shoreline of the Black Sea, I began to see people sunbathing, sitting on slatted wooden lounge chairs on the black pebbled beaches. The sea was not black, by the

way, but a bright blue.

Once while we were sidetracked, I was watching a group of women sitting on a low stone wall by a freight train. One in a blue shirt, black skirt, heavy stockings, and flat shoes suddenly jumped onto the side of the freight as it began to move; I suppose she was a switchman (switchwoman?).

I've always thought no one could beat Mississippi when it comes to hospitality and friendliness. But I found that Russians are our rivals in that line, and especially Georgians. One example of their giving spirit: On this train, a five-year-old boy, Giorgi, and her mother were passengers for a few hours. Neither could speak English, but they became friends anyhow with a foursome from Arkansas. The mother gave Charlotte Schexnayder a Georgia flag. Charlotte gave Giorgi an Arkansas pin. Mother and boy gave Charlotte a bag of candy. Charlotte gave Giorgi cheese and crackers. The mother and boy went to the small snack bar and returned with two bottles of soda, pear and lemon, for the Arkansans. Charlotte found some dinosaur stickers for Giorgi.

Later Charlotte wrote, "If leaders and governments would leave it to the people, we observed, people of all nations could be friends."

When at mid-day we arrived in Sochi, the porter pitched our bags out, and piled them near a big magnolia tree.

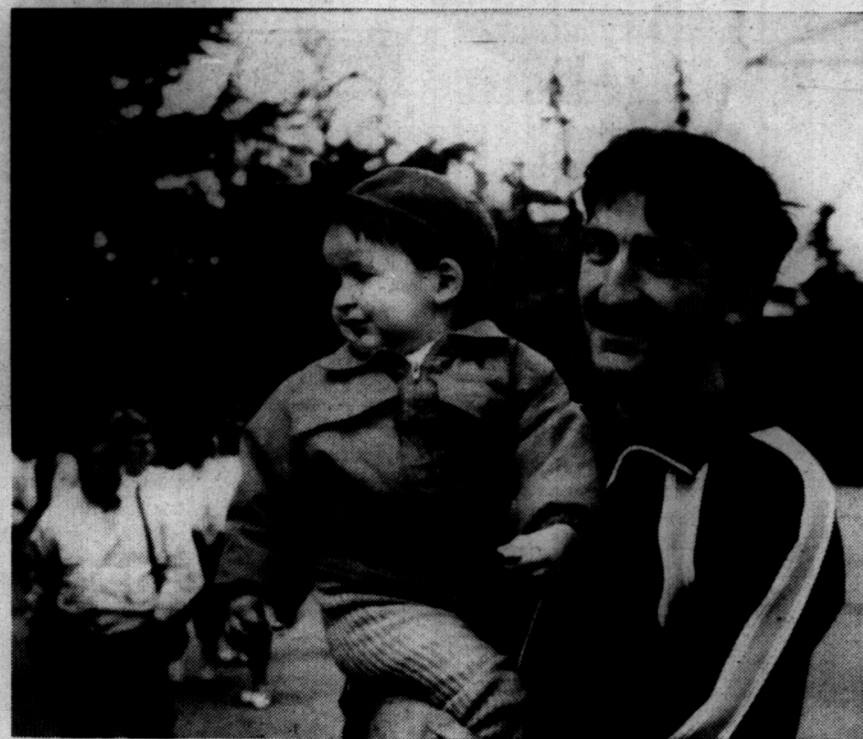
I've been thinking that life is like that railroad journey, with its blind curves, its tunnels, its sidetracks, and, in long stretches, its beautiful meadows. In the dark of night, we find ourselves trapped behind the locked door of sin. Only Jesus can open that door. But when we send him the signal, he will answer and give us our freedom. In this season called Christmas, we have much to celebrate!

Van Cliburn visits Soviet Union

SHREVEPORT, La. — Southern Baptist layman Ray Boswell of Shreveport, La., was one of eight people invited to travel with American pianist Van Cliburn to the Soviet Union over the summer. Cliburn, a Shreveport native and also a Southern Baptist, asked his lifetime friend Boswell to go with him on the concert tour.

Cliburn performed in Moscow and

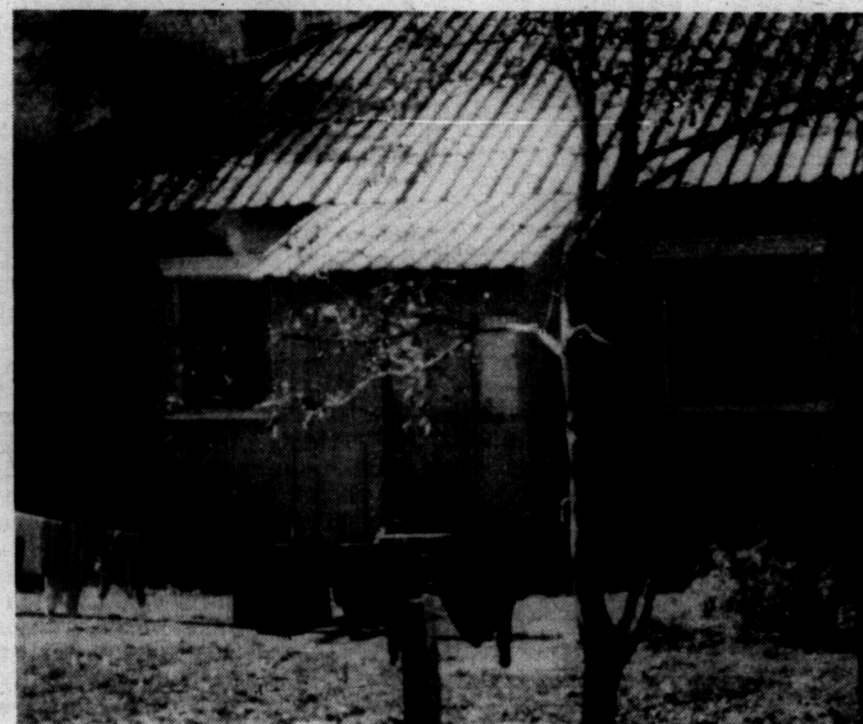
Leningrad at the invitation of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and his wife, Raisa. Boswell, a member of Highland Baptist Church in Shreveport, took with him copies of "Enduring Faith," a documentary on Baptists in the Soviet Union produced by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. He had hoped to present a copy to Gorbachev, but did not get to meet the president.



Young Alexander clutches candy in his fists. It was given him by American tourists while he and his father, Azutyun, were at a mountaintop park in Tbilisi, Soviet Georgia. It is the custom in the USSR for tourists to ask permission to take pictures of citizens and then in return give them a small gift such as candy.



An old woman at a farmer's market in Tbilisi, Georgia, clowns as she tries on an American hat given her by Janet Jenkins, journalist from Iowa.



A tiny house by the railroad track somewhere between Tbilisi and Sochi, in southern USSR, is painted blue and pink, and has a metal roof.

Evangelism Report

Helping To Bring Mississippi
And The World To Jesus

Churches Reporting	Gospel Presentations	Number of Conversions
Adams		
Alcorn		
Attala		
Benton		
Bolivar		
Calhoun		
Carroll		
Chickasaw		
Choctaw		
Clarke		
Clay		
Copiah		
Covington		
Franklin	22	2 0
George		
Greene		
Grenada		
Gulfcoast		
Hinds-Madison	3	18 3
Holmes	1	2 2
Humphreys		
Itawamba		
Jackson	13	23 3
Jasper		
Jeff Davis		
Jones		
Kemper		
Lafayette	2	4 4
Lamar		
Lauderdale		
Lawrence		
Leake		
Lebanon	7	183 0
Lee		
Leflore	1	5 3
Lincoln		
Lowndes		
Marion		
Marshall	2	5 5
Mississippi		
Monroe		
Montgomery		
Neshoba		
New Choctaw		
Newton		
North Delta		
Northwest		
Noxubee		
Oktibbeha		
Panola		
Pearl River		
Perry		
Pike		
Pontotoc		
Prentiss		
Rankin	59	12 11
Scott		
Sharkey-Issaquena		
Simpson		
Smith		
Sunflower		
Tallahatchie		
Tippah		
Tishomingo		
Union		
Union Co.		
Walthall		
Warren		
Washington		
Wayne		
Webster		
Winston		
Yalobusha	8	22 3
Yazoo		

Names in the news



Pictured are members of New Hope Church, Foxworth, who have attended Sunday School ranging from one year to 34 years. B. B. Stringer has been in School every Sunday for the past 34 years.



Stringer

Holly Church, Alcorn Association, ordained Jeff Bobo as a deacon Oct. 26. Philip Cooper, pastor, preached the ordination sermon. Jeff's father, Dave Bobo, also a deacon in Holly Church, led in the ordination prayer.

Marion Adams has moved back to Mississippi, after having served churches in Wisconsin for 24 years. He is available for a pastorate and also for supply or interim work. He and his wife are living at 1807 Wildwood Dr., Meridian, MS 39307. His phone number is 483-7733.

Nick Davis has been called as music director at Heidelberg Church, Heidelberg. He is a student at William Carey College. J. W. Tynes is pastor.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN. (EP) — Billy Graham, who celebrated his 71st birthday Nov. 7, confirmed that he will continue his intense schedule of crusade ministry.

"I do not intend to retire," said Graham. "Nowhere do I find in the Bible that a preacher retired. My doctors have suggested that I slow down somewhat. But as long as God gives me breath, I expect to preach the Gospel."

First, Brandon, publishes history, releases this week

The new history of First Church, Brandon, *The Patience Of Providence*, was written by Tom Nettles, who was reared in Brandon and in First Church. He graduated from Mississippi College and received the doctor of philosophy degree from Southwestern Seminary. He has taught at Southwestern Seminary, and at Mid-America Seminary, and is presently on the faculty of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Ill.

The book begins by describing the conditions facing all settlers, as well as Baptist, in the immediate post-revolutionary days in the Mississippi Territory.

After a discussion of the courage and theological confessions of those early Baptists, the origins of Brandon Baptist life under the leadership of pastor T.S.N. King in 1935 is chronicled. Information concerning antebellum, Civil War, World War I, depression, World War II, and contemporary days winds its way through the lives, struggles, and victories of the people of First Baptist Church.

After meeting initially in the Brandon Female Academy, the first building, a white frame structure on the corner of Jasper and College streets, was completed in 1882. In 1945, the church, not without opposition, voted to build a brick building on the present site.

No attempt is made to hide or exaggerate the controversies, humaneness, and, sometimes greatness of the persons connected with First Baptist Church. Pertinent data on virtually every pastor and pictures of many are included. The importance of its lay leadership is also given prominence. "Many people beyond the member-

ship of First Baptist Church, Brandon, should find the book interesting and helpful in understanding the spiritual context of Rankin County," states Mrs. Carey Cox, chairman of the committee which planned for a history of the church to be written.

"Copies of the book are available through First Baptist Church, 309 South College Street, Brandon, MS 39042. The cost of the book is \$10.00. Mail orders should add \$1.50 for postage and handling," said Mrs. Cox. The book came off the press this week.

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Annuity Board's fixed fund to earn 8.9 percent in '90

DALLAS (BP) — The Southern Baptist Annuity Board has announced a Fixed Fund earnings rate of 8.9 percent for 1990 and a one-time crediting of excess that raises the 1989 earnings rate to about 9 percent.

President Darold H. Morgan announced the 1990 earnings rate, noting an increase from the 1989 rate of 8.75 percent.

"We are also pleased that actual 1989 earnings will allow us to make an additional credit to accounts that will raise the effective annualized rate to approximately 9 percent," he said.

The Annuity Board offers four funds to which members may direct their contributions while employed by Southern Baptist Convention churches and entities. These funds have varying earnings and degrees of risk. Each member decides his own risk tolerance.

The Fixed Fund is the board's most conservative plan fund. Plan members' accumulations in the Fixed Fund are invested in fixed income assets. The primary objectives are preservation of principal and predictable returns.

Fixed income assets presently in the Fixed Fund include guaranteed investment contracts issued by major life insurance companies, bank investment contracts and related deposit products issued by commercial banks, and high-quality money market investments.

The other funds are: the Balanced Fund, a mixture of common stocks and bonds; the variable fund, comprised of common stocks and securities convertible to common stocks; and the Short-Term Fund, primarily money-market investments.

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	Coinsurance	80%	100%	100%
Type II	Restorative Procedures			
	Deductible	\$50 C.Y.	\$50 C.Y.	\$50 C.Y.
	Coinsurance	80%	80%	80%
Type III	Major Restorative Procedures			
	Deductible	Not Covered	\$50 C.Y. 50%	\$50 C.Y. 50%
	Coinsurance			
Maximum Benefit Year	Types I, II, and III	\$750	\$1000	\$1500
Type IV	Orthodontia Benefits			
	Deductible	Not Covered	Not Covered	\$50 L.T. 50%
	Coinsurance			
Lifetime Benefits		N/A	N/A	\$1000

NOTES:

- (1) C.Y. (Calendar Year); L.T. (Life Time)
- (2) Calendar Year deductibles are combined for Type I, II, and III procedures. Maximum of Three (3) deductibles per family per calendar year.
- (3) Major Restorative procedures are available after twelve (12) months of continuous coverage.
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Just for the Record



Royal Ambassador Week was proclaimed the week of Nov. 5-11. Pictured, leaders in Washington Association with two proclamations signed by Governor Ray Mabus, Jackson, and Mayor W. C. Burnly Jr., of Greenville, left to right, are L. R. Adam Gonzalez of Lakeview Church; Buster Jones and Ed Daniels of Southside Church; Bruce Patterson of Riverport Church; and James Kerr, RA director of Washington Association.

The RAs of Washington Association helped with services on Sunday by leading in prayer, reading Scripture, taking up offering, and singing in RAs all boy choir.



Acteen Coronation, First Church, Boyle: Left to right are queen with scepter, Beth Hood; Sidney Melton, scepter-bearer; queen regent in service, Mechelle Plnkston; service aide, Kenna McClafflin; queen, Miranda Medders; Tiffany Grimmer, crown-bearer; queen, Rhonda Holland; Rachel Therrell, crown-bearer. Kenna McClafflin received the certificate for service aide and is the first Acteen in Bolivar Association to have reached this level of achievement.



Members of Pioneer Church, Woodville, with perfect Sunday School attendance for the past year, are pictured with number of years, left to right, Dave Carter, 42 years; Mrs. I. A. Carter, one year; Doris Carter, three years; Warren Whitaker Jr., one year; and Lacy Whitaker, two years. O. B. Beverly is pastor.

"A Storybook Christmas" will be presented Dec. 17, 18, and 19 at 7 p.m. each evening at First Church, Lyman.

This is a musical production centered around four major Christmas themes, snow, contemporary, home, and nativity, fully staged, with costume, scenery, props, and hundreds of Christmas lights.

It will be performed by the church orchestra, adult choir, youth choir, children's choir, preschool choir, and

handbells of First Church, Lyman. It will also include favorite Christmas music such as "Carol of the Bells," and "Winter Wonderland." Alan Stevens, minister of music, will direct the production. Admission is free.

Pilgrim's Rest Church of Attala County will present a Christmas program, "The Christmas Story," Dec. 17, at 7 p.m. Refreshments will be served after the program. Walter Hines is pastor.



GA recognition service, First Church, Boyle: Left to right are row 1 — Stephanie Tindle, Carla Holland, Lola Crawford, Lori Barnett, Memorie McCreary; row 2 — Cristy Therrell, Mandy Robinson, Heather Gant, Rene Hargrove; row 3 — Sylvia Hood, leader; Betty Robinson, leader; Cary Crawford, Tammie Collier, leader; Jeannie McCreary, leader.



New Zion Church, Leake Association, ordained Dwight McDill and Pete Russell as deacons, Nov. 5. Ordination message was brought by Mike Harper, pastor. The charge to the church and to the deacon was brought by Marvin Lucroy.

The music ministry of First Church, Yazoo City, will present "THE LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS" on Dec. 17, with two performances, at 4 p.m. and at 7 p.m.

This program will feature the youth choir, sanctuary choir, handbells, organ, piano, and orchestra under direction of Mrs. Ruth Henley, music ministry coordinator at the church. James F. Yates is pastor.

"Christmas in the Cottonpatch" next week

Christmas in the Cottonpatch," a north Mississippi tradition since 1960, will be presented again this year, Dec. 17-27, beginning each night at 8. The place: the cottonfield across from Abel's Store on Highway 5, about midway between Hickory Flat and Ashland.

Seventeen larger than life scenes dominate the seven-acre field, and thousands of small lights representing stars reach a quarter of a mile in depth and climax near a star which measures 24 feet from point to point. The program consists of narration and song, and at the proper time each scene in the field is lighted. Finally all scenes are lighted, and the life of Christ is depicted.

A new script is written each year by Lola Autry and also the music is changed, but the story of course does not change. Amplifiers carry the message so all may hear.

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Missionary news

Stanley and Glenna Stamps, missionaries to Honduras, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: Apartado 51, El Progreso St., Yoro, Honduras). He is a native of Prentiss, Miss., and she is the former Glenna Morgan of Hill County, Texas.

R. T. and Frances Buckley, missionaries to Bangladesh, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: Rt. 2, Box 6, Picayune, Miss. 39466). He is a native of Picayune. The former Frances Boynes, she was born in Gibson, Miss.

Daniel and Wanda Henderson, missionaries to Korea, have arrived in the States on furlough (address: c/o Prentiss Baptist Church, P. O. Box 297, Prentiss, Miss. 39474). He is a native of Laurel. The former Wanda Wilson, she was born in Fort Worth, Texas, and considers Hattiesburg, Miss., her hometown.

At the beginning of 1989, the total Southern Baptist missionary force was 3,853; that's only one foreign missionary for every 4,000 Southern Baptists.

Payton and Helen Myers, missionaries to Nigeria, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: Rt. 1, Box 329, West Point, Miss. 39773). They are natives of Mississippi. He was born in Hazelhurst and grew up in Jackson; she is the former Helen Green of Prentiss.

Sam and Ginny Cannata, missionaries to Tanzania, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 133 S. Eden, Shawnee, Okla. 74801). He is a native of Houston, Texas, and she is the former Virginia Currey of Hollandale, Miss.

CLEMSON, S.C. — Retired Southern Baptist missionary Martha Franks received an honorary doctoral degree from Clemson University. Clemson recognized the South Carolinian for her "life devoted to serving others," including four decades of missionary work in China and Taiwan, her service to South Carolina schools and her efforts to help establish the Martha Franks Retirement Center in Laurens, S.C., where she now resides.

Mike and Wanda Newton, missionaries to Korea, have completed furlough and returned to the field (address: P. O. Box 5, NAM Taegu 705-600, Korea). A native of Louisiana, he was born in Jennings. The former Wanda Dedaux, she was born in Hattiesburg.

William and Barbara Moseley, missionaries to Brazil, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: Rt. 2, Box 46, Lambert, Miss. 38643). A native of Florida, he was born in Wauchula. She is the former Barbara Cooke of Crowder, Miss.

COCHRANE, Canada — Robert Tucker, academic dean at the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary near Calgary, Alberta, has been named the Foreign Mission Board's coordinator for Canada. He will be a liaison between Canadian Southern Baptists and other Baptist groups in Canada.

More than 4,000 patients receive treatment daily at Baptist hospitals and clinics, but 1.5 billion of the world's people have no access to medical care.

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Paul's call to walk in the Spirit

By R. Raymond Lloyd
Galatians 2-6, 13-25

Paul now turns from doctrine to duty — duties which grow out of a right relationship with God (5:1 is the triumphant climax of his defense of the truth of the gospel). Now he calls upon his readers to avoid a lapse into legalism and license (vss. 2-15), and to pursue a life led by the Spirit (vss. 16-25).



Lloyd

Avoid a lapse into legalism 5:2-6. Paul makes a very moving appeal to his misguided converts. Phillips catches the impact of "I, Paul" with his paraphrase: "Listen to me, for this is serious!" The Galatians are being called on once and for all to choose either Christ or the Mosaic law. The "if you be circumcised" is present tense, indicating that the developments are still at a stage where they may be arrested. If they accept circumcision, it is tantamount to a full surrender to legalism. It is in essence a pledge to live by the law. And if one is committed to the law method of salvation, he cuts himself off from the grace method — the Christ method, for there is no combining the gospel of grace and the law of Moses. To accept one is to reject the other.

BIBLE BOOK

Three clear-cut warnings are given to the Galatians. If they accept circumcision as a means of being set right with God then: (1) they will lose the benefits of Christ's work (vs. 2). If they make circumcision the condition of salvation, then "Christ will help them not at all" (Robertson). (2) They bind themselves to keep the whole law (vs. 3) — "to sacrifice freedom in one essential, you sacrifice it altogether" (Moffatt). (3) They leave Christianity and join Judaism (vs. 4). The clearest translation here is "ye are done with Christ!" If one turns to the law, one's relation with Christ is finished. One should be careful not to read too much into "... fallen from grace." It simply means that if one turns to the law as the means of salvation, he turns away from grace.

In contrast the true Christian is dependent on faith as the means whereby he is accepted of God (vss. 5-6). Faith is the sole basis of our hope. If a person is in union with Christ, circumcision means nothing and lack of it means nothing. "All that matters is faith which finds expression in love."

Avoid a lapse into license (5:13-15). Apparently some Galatians took Paul's anti-legalistic approach as an excuse for loose behaviour. Our

freedom in Christ is to be obedient to the law of love (Cf. 5:6; also Lev. 19:18; Mark 12:31). Apparently this was not taking place among the Galatians as he implies from "bite and devour" (vs. 15 — depicts wild animals fighting). If this keeps up, they will simply destroy one another. Isn't that what we see happening all about us? When will we learn?

Pursue a life led by the Spirit (5:16-26). The best way to resist the baser temptations of life is to be controlled by the Spirit ("keep on walking"). It will not be easy because of the constant inner struggle going on in every person between "flesh" and "spirit" (Reads Romans 7:15-25 — especially Phillips). Paul lists their respective characteristics.

A. The works of the flesh. Three areas of life are included in this list of sins: sex, worship and social relationships. Sexual sins (19b) are "fornication" (sex outside marriage); "uncleanliness" (moral impurity) and "lasciviousness" (lack of restraint in sexual behaviour). Sins associated with worship (20a) are "idolatry" (material things that have taken the place of God) and "witchcraft" (any kind of magic). Social sin (20b-21) are "hatred" (hostility — opposite of love for all men), "variance" (discord, dissension), "emulations" (envy, greed, covetousness), "wrath" ("fits of rage" — NEB), "strife" (selfish interest — no desire to serve),

"seditions" (standing apart — no community), "heresies" (organized division into groups), "envyings" (a grudging spirit of ill-will to another), "drunkenness, revellings" (public carousal), and such like (not an exhaustive list). Society hasn't changed much, has it?

B. The fruits of the Spirit. Fruit depicts growth and "the normal out-cropping of the Holy Spirit in us" (Robertson). Nine fruits are produced: "love" (agape, unconquerable benevolence, Cf. I Cor. 13), "joy" (deep satisfaction rooted in God's grace — from same word as grace), "peace" (everything that makes for man's best good), "longsuffering" (long-tempered), "gentleness, goodness" (sweet disposition, yet with firmness), "faith" (trustworthy), "meekness" (submissive to a higher authority), "temperance" (self control). Read Barclay for a superb treatment of these words.

Having been converted ("crucified the flesh"), the power of passions and desires is broken by Christ. If therefore one derives his life from Christ ("live by the Spirit"), then one should walk the straight line toward the goal of Christ's control of his life ("walk in the Spirit"). What changes need to be made in your life to allow the Spirit to have more control?

Lloyd is pastor, First, Starkville.

To drink of Living Water means never to thirst again

By Billy R. Williams
John 4:7-15, 27-19, 39-42

God has made man so that he can never be satisfied without him. The focal passage for this Sunday sets forth the truth that Jesus Christ alone can satisfy this soul-thirst for God.



Williams

First notice THE OFFER OF A GIFT as Jesus encountered the Samaritan woman at the well (vs. 7-15). Samaria lay between Judea and Galilee. Because of their hostility to the Samaritans, Jews when traveling from Judea to Galilee would normally take a longer route on the east side of the Jordan River. However, Jesus was motivated by a different compulsion — the compulsion of love (vs. 4). He therefore led his disciples through Samaria as they traveled to Galilee. Wary of travel, Jesus rested at the well of Jacob near a town named Sychar (vs. 5,6). He was alone because his disciples had gone into the city to buy food (vs. 8).

At the noon hour a woman came to the well to draw water. That she came at noon and alone implied that she was being ostracized by the other women. Jesus' humanity and humility

UNIFORM

was demonstrated as he requested the Samaritan woman to share water with him (vs. 7). Some commentators see her response in verse 9 as one of sarcasm. It is more probable that her response was one of surprise that a Jewish man, who normally feared ceremonial defilement, would ask water from a Samaritan woman. The Jews despised the Samaritans as half-breeds, and the feeling on the part of the Samaritans was mutual.

Jesus used this opportunity to bear witness to the woman by suggesting that had she known who was sitting at the well she would have asked of him and he would have given her "living water" (vs. 10). This expression normally denoted spring water or running water as distinct from water collected in a cistern. However, Jesus used this figure to speak of a greater gift of God than the purest earthly spring could supply — eternal life. The running water aptly illustrates the fresh and never-ending supply of God's grace through the indwelling Spirit. Unfortunately the woman thought that by "living water" Jesus meant fresh spring water like that in Jacob's well. Since he had no means of drawing the water, she questioned from where it would come (vs.

11). Was Jesus suggesting that he was greater than Jacob who dug the well (vs. 12)? Perhaps there is a deeper significance in the woman's words. She, as many descendants of Jacob, were content with spiritual refreshment inferior to that bestowed by Christ. Jesus' response implied that indeed he was greater than Jacob.

To drink from Jacob's well, no matter how good the water, was to thirst again (vs. 13). However, to drink from the water which Jesus had to offer is to find an endless supply of living water (vs. 14). Jesus was offering something not only superior to the water of Jacob's well, but to the legal religion of Jews and Samaritans alike. Like most people, the woman's thoughts were preoccupied with the satisfaction of her physical needs. She thought how wonderful it would be to have a supply of this miraculous water, ending the need for daily trips to the well. Therefore, she requested that Jesus give her of this water (vs. 15).

It is at this point that Jesus confronted the woman with her sinful condition and the demands of true religion (vs. 16-24). He also made himself known to her as the Messiah (vs. 25-26).

The second thing to note is THE WITNESS TO AN ENCOUNTER (vs. 27-29). Upon returning, the disciples were astonished to find their

teacher talking to a Samaritan woman. However, out of respect for Jesus, the disciples did not voice their questions (vs. 27). The woman was so excited about her encounter with Jesus that as she hurried back to the city to share her experience she forgot her waterpot (vs. 28). If only Christians today would become excited about their encounter with Christ and forget some of their "waterpots." She may have avoided the company of her fellow citizens previously, but no longer, for now she was a changed woman. She shared that Jesus had revealed the most intimate details about her life and for that reason he must be the Messiah (vs. 29). Impressed by her story, the people decided to see for themselves (vs. 30).

The focal passages conclude with THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE SAVIOR (vs. 39-42). The Samaritan woman was an unlikely witness, but through her testimony many of the Samaritans trusted in Jesus (vs. 39). The "living water" that flowed now in her life flowed out into the lives of others. Her witness was essential to help them hear about Jesus, however, it was necessary that they know him for themselves. Therefore, they invited Jesus to spend time with them (vs. 40). In the two days he spent with them, they came to personal faith in Christ as Savior (vs. 42).

Williams is pastor, First, Gautier.

"Bridge the cultural gaps and speak of Jesus"

By Randall L. Von Kanel
Acts 17:22-31

We live in a world of many people groups who represent many creeds and cultures. Penetrating the spiritual darkness of the nations with the Good News of Jesus Christ will necessitate bridging cultural differences. The central truth of our lesson is that "we are to communicate the gospel in ways that indicate awareness of the culture and interests of our hearers."



Von Kanel

Donald A. McGavran wrote of "the Lordship of Christ in a pluralistic society." Without destroying "the rich cultural diversity" of our world, he proposed that the mission enterprise could be effective in crossing cultural barriers with the gospel. Paul, in our scripture text (Acts 17:22-31), understood the culture of the Athenians and used their religious perception as a launching point for a Christian witness.

A. Paul's method

Paul was very much aware of the Greek

LIFE AND WORK

culture in which he worked as a missionary. The Hellenized world encompassed all of the Mediterranean basin in which the early church operated in the first century of witness. Athens was the center of Greek culture and the host city of a multitude of old and new philosophies. The Stoics and Epicureans were active there in espousing their contrasting viewpoints on the essence of life (Acts 17:18-21).

Paul, picking up on the "crossfire" of ideas in this cosmopolitan city, introduced the Lord of life to the thinkers of that day. His method was three-fold. First, he visited the "Areopagus," the assembly on Mars Hill that was given to hearing "some new thing." Understanding their cultural taste for philosophical discussion, Paul stood in the place of greatest opportunity to present the truth of Jesus Christ (vv. 21-22). Second, he spoke out of his understanding of their religious culture and addressed their penchant for worshipping the gods. Finally, he took advantage of their religious lean and promised to answer a question for which they had no answer — namely,

the question of the "unknown God" (v. 23). Paul has given us insight in mission methodology. If we are to share the story of salvation with those of other cultures, we must understand those cultures and find ways to bridge into the gospel presentation.

B. Paul's message

Having gained an audience, Paul then preached to them of the one true and living God (vv. 24-31). Again, Paul related to the culture and customs of those to whom he ministered. In verses 24-25, Paul began his sermon with reference to a living God as opposed to the idols of Mars Hill. God is not limited to "temples made with hands." Paul declared him to be the living Lord who "giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (v. 25). Using the Greek's religious system of temples and idols, Paul contrasted these dead gods with the true God who is "lord of heaven and earth" (v. 24).

His message continued with a direct rebuttal of the prevailing Stoic and Epicurean ideas. Paul presented God as the One who is intricately and intimately involved in our world in contrast to the Epicureans who saw God as a detached deity without concern for life on earth (vv. 26-27). Paul argued that God is person, in

contrast to the pantheism of the Stoics, teaching that they might "feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us" (v. 27b).

Having beautifully used the cultural bridge to open a window of receptivity, Paul charged through with the major point of his sermon. In verses 30-31, Paul preached Jesus as the man who was ordained by God to "judge the world in righteousness." Stating that God had looked past their existing lack of knowledge (v. 30), Paul introduced them to the knowledge of God's plan of salvation. With the knowledge now of God's person and plan, Paul called for the Greeks to repent. The Greek "metanoia" literally means "a change of mind." Paul challenged these thinkers to accept the truth of Jesus Christ.

There is so much we can and should accept in the cultures of our world. Our diversities form a beautiful mosaic reflecting the creative power, love, and wisdom of God. When culture runs contrary to the gospel, we should work for change but when culture presents us with an opportunity to witness, we should "bridge the gap" and speak of Jesus.

Von Kanel is pastor, First, Hattiesburg.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

The Baptist Children's Village

Paul N. Nunnery, Executive Director

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of the Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

Oct. 1, 1989 -
Oct. 31, 1989

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SCRAPBOOK

I'll keep on climbing

Fear, loneliness, sorrow and despair,
emotions my heart finds troublesome to bear.
Weighted and burdened, I feel the pain,
Somehow, Lord, make it better again.

Weak and weary, I cannot carry the load,
the mountains are too high and rocky's the road.
Strengthen me, Lord, oh how I need you today,
To help carry my cross and show me your way.

The road's still rocky, and the mountains are still high
but now that you're beside me, my limits's the sky.
I'll keep on climbing until I touch that star
Oh Lord, thank you — how great you are!

—Debra Glenn
Poplarville

"Go Ye"

There's a lion standing before me
With shaggy mane,
Mouth opened wide, showing fierce teeth!
Don't run — he's made of wood.

He's beautifully hand-carved
Revealing delicate features
And lovely grains in wood,
By an expert craftsman.

Given at Christmastime
By a missionary family
Home on furlough
From Kenya, Africa.

Now I don't see the lion
But them instead . . .
I've known the Pontiers
For many years.

I've watched their five children
As they grew up —
In visits, pictures, letters, and cards
From year to year.



I remember sending a picture
And that night by her bed
Three-year-old Martha prayed:
"Dear God, please bless
The lady on the plane."

Now all five are grown
And have found their places
In God's vineyard,
Some at home and some abroad.

The gift was a token of love and friendship
Shared all through the years.

Though land and sea apart,
We'd meet at God's throne.

When Jesus said, "Go ye"
He meant every one . . .
We go or send and pray.
Thank you, Pontiers, for going!

—Ruby Singley
Columbia

First, Senatobia, honors Flowers on 30th anniversary as pastor

The congregation of First Church, Senatobia, celebrated the 30th anniversary of the ministry of Pastor and Mrs. John Flowers on Sept. 3. The morning service featured a dramatic litany and choral presentation based on Micah 6:8 which was said to characterize Flowers' ministry: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

The congregation, relatives, former church members, and community visitors heard Marian Schaffer, Memphis Symphony harpist, present several sacred selections during the worship service. Also the harpist performed at an afternoon reception in the Family Life Center. Reception guests viewed a display of memorabilia and photographs entitled "The Shepherd's Path," depicting the 30 years of Flowers' ministry.

The Chancel Choir concluded the day's activities, with a concert in the Flowerses' honor. The choir, under direction of R. Clay Moore, minister of music and youth, sang three pieces written to honor the pastor and wife. A quartet sang "There'll be Flowers," written several years ago by a church member, Tom Wilson, to convey his love for the Flowers family. "Shepherd's Psalm," a solo based on

the 23rd Psalm and composed and presented by Clay Moore, paid tribute to the ministry of Flowers. Additionally, the Chancel Choir had commissioned Mary McDonald, well known composer, to express the Micah scripture musically; they presented her work, "All I Ask of You."

The deacon body of First, Senatobia, has established a trust to be known as the John Flowers Trust Fund. "In deep appreciation for his years of unselfish service and dedicated commitment to the church, this endowment will forever carry his name and provide an avenue for his ministry to continue for years to come," said Sanford Powell, chairman of deacons. Proceeds from the interest of this trust will be utilized initially as a retirement supplement for Flowers and his wife, Jessie, and eventually to support other endeavors as deemed by the deacon body.

Also the congregation elected to hold an annual day of recognition in the spring when the Flowerses are to be honored. This day will be marked and set aside with the installation of a bronze plaque in the courtyard between the chapel and sanctuary. The courtyard is a setting for a large dogwood tree which will be known as "John's tree" so that when it blooms, members of First Church, Senatobia and visitors will remember John and

Jessie Flowers and their ministry. "Friends wishing to honor Flowers may forward contribution to the Trust Fund in care of the First Baptist Church, P. O. Box 99, Senatobia, Mississippi 38668," states Powell.



Marian Schaffer, Memphis harpist, presents special music.

Joyful German Baptists ponder post-wall future

By Toby Druin

BERLIN (BP) — Germans traditionally observe the first Sunday in October as their day of thanksgiving, marking the day as "Harvest Sunday."

But after recent events, they likely will circle Nov. 10 as the day they give thanks, and it will not be for the bounty reaped from their fields, but for the freedoms granted in East Germany.

On Nov. 12, every West Berlin Baptist church had visitors from East Berlin, two days after the East German government gave its citizens the freedom to move to and from East Germany.

And Nov. 14, for the first time since the Berlin Wall was erected in 1961, Baptist pastors from both sides of the wall were able to hold a fellowship meeting in West Berlin.

They met at the Bethel House, mother house of the Bethel order of Baptist deaconesses, to discuss the new freedoms, the opportunities they present, and how both East and West Berlin churches should respond.

Since the wall was erected, West Berlin pastors have been able to travel to the East side of the wall, but their East Berlin counterparts have not been able to respond. The meeting Nov. 14 was their first in the West in 28 years.

Many of the dozen or so who attended did not know each other, but the meeting soon resembled a weekly pastors' conference in any association in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Also attending was James A. Smith, Southern Baptist missionary representative in Eastern Europe, who relates to East Germany and Poland and especially to the East Berlin pastors. He has preached in many of their churches, and several of the pastors came to his home near the Bethel House after the meeting.

Eleven Baptist churches are in East Berlin, associated with other churches in the Union of Evangelical Free Churches in the German Democratic Republic. East German Baptists number about 12,000. Many of the pastors attended the meeting in West Berlin, Nov. 14.

They came with many concerns, not only about how many of their members would emigrate to the West, but also how to confront problems they see coming from free association with the West, such as cults and other religious groups and materialism.

Wolfgang Klempert, pastor of

Weisensee Baptist Church in East Berlin, expressed fear about the new developments and how his church might cope with them. He asked what to expect and added that "isolation has had some comfort."

Siegfried Holtz, a youth pastor at an East Berlin church, said he saw the "new time" as a challenge for the East Berlin churches. "We need to make our churches places where someone wants to stay," he said.

The churches must re-evaluate what is needed to make them attractive, especially to the youth, he added.

Reichelt said that the protest marches that swept over East Berlin had their origins in the churches following Monday evening prayer meetings. The church buildings, the only places not controlled by the state, were the only places for dissidents for outcast groups to meet, he said. Before, many people had turned their backs on the churches, but now, largely because of the churches' prominence in the protest movement, many are returning.

Toby Druin, associate editor of the Texas Baptist Standard, who was visiting relatives in West Germany, travelled to East and West and phoned in this report on the historic events taking place there.



Bill and Sara Beth Harbour visit with John and Jessie Flowers, during reception held for the Flowerses. Harbour is a former Baptist Student Union director at Northwest Miss. Community College, Senatobia. Left to right are Bill Harbour, Jessie Flowers, Sara Beth Harbour, and John Flowers.

Chinese Bible 'book of year'

NANJING, China (EP) — If China had a book of the year, the Bible would probably be it. It's a "hot item" there, to both Christians and unbelievers, according to Chinese Christians.

The evidence of its popularity is great. The Amity Printing Press, which began operation less than two years ago, recently printed its millionth copy of the Bible. The price tag on Amity Bibles is often ignored in some areas of China, where laws of supply and demand can bring a price 13 times the cover value.

Also, young scholars in Beijing, all non-Christians, edited and published a book entitled "The New World of the Bible," containing articles on the Bible and Western thought as expressed in literature, philosophy, and ethics. A significant portion of the book consists of direct quotations from the Bible.

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